

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

OMB-01 DRC-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 /138 W

----- 018836

R 030820Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9517

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

DIA

COMUSFORAZ

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1739

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PO

SUBJ: PORTUGUESE MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: IMPORTANT STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF MEDIA IN
PORTUGAL NOW UNDERWAY. LEFTISTS WON FIRST ROUND,
BUT JUNTA APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN RESTORING BALANCE.
END SUMMARY.

1. 1. IN WAKE OF ABOLITION OF PRESS CENSORSHIP AND LOOSENING
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OF CONTROLS ON RADIO AND TV BROADCASTS, STRUGGLE FOR

INFLUENCE AND CONTROL OF MASS MEDIA HAS ENSUED.
ALL DAILY NEWSPAPERS HAVE SUPPORTED JUNTA, WITH MORE
IDEOLOGICAL ONES INTERPRETING DEVELOPMENTS IN LIGHT MOST
FAVORABLE TO THEIR PARTISANS. EXTENSIVE COVERAGE HAS
BEEN GIVEN TO WORDS AND ACTIONS OF SOCIALISTS AND
COMMUNISTS OUT OF PROPORTION TO THEIR POLITICAL
CLOUT HERE.

2. DURING FIRST SEVERAL DAYS AFTER COUP FAR LEFT
APPEARED TO CONTROL RADION AND TV WITH ACQUIESCENCE
OF JUNTA. ON APRIL 30 STAFF MEMBERS FROM CATHOLIC RADIO
STATION REPORTEDLY PROTESTED TO JUNTA OVER STATION
MANAGER'S REFUSAL TO PERMIT BROADCASTS OF INTERVIEW
WITH PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY SECGEN ALVARO CUNHAL.
WE UNDERSTAND JUNTA THEN ORDERED DISMISSAL OF STATION
MANAGER AND CUNHAL INTERVIEW WAS BROADCAST.

3. GOVERNMENT-OWNED TV NETWORK APRIL 28 CARRIED LONG
EMOTIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION BY COMMUNISTS AND LEFT-
WING SOCIALISTS WITHOUT REFERENCE TO MORE MODERATE
OPPONENTS OF REGIME. TV ALSO CARRIED AIRL 30 REMARKS OF CUNHAL
AT AIRPORT ARRIVAL AND SHOWED FILM OF HIS DEPARTURE FROM AIRPORT
IN CAR FLYING SOVIET FLAG.

4. TV COVERAGE RECOVERED BALANCE APRIL 30 WITH INTER-
VIEWS BY DOZEN POLITICAL FIGURES COVERING SPECTRUM FROM
MODERATE RIGHT WING TO PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WITH
LARGEST NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS COMING FROM BROAD CENTER.
ALL INTERVIEWS BROADCAST TWICE. ALL PERSONS INTERVIEWED
CALLED FOR ORDERLY DEMONSTRATIONS ON MAY DAY BUT PCP
REPRESENTATIVE OTAVIO PATO REMINDED LISTENERS THAT
MAY DAY IS "DAY OF STRUGGLE" AS WELL AS DAY OF CELEBRATION.
HIGHLIGHTS OF OTHER INTERVIEWS:

A) FORMER LIBERAL DEPUTY SA CARNEIRO WARNED AGAINST
"DICTATORSHIP OF THE LEFT" AS WELL AS OF THE RIGHT.
B) FORMER LIBERAL DEPUTY MILLER GUERRA STATED THAT HE
WOULD ACCEPT A GOVERNMENT POSITION UNDER THE RIGHT
CONDITIONS, AND THAT JUNTA "IS CREATING THOSE CONDITIONS".
C) FORMER LIBERAL DEPUTY FRANCISCO BALSEMAO ANNOUNCED
PLANS FOR FORMATION OF CENTER PARTY, IN WHICH HE WILL
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PARTICIPATE, AND NOTED THAT TRULY DEMOCRATIC
REGIME WOULD INVARIABLY HAVE A RIGHT WING, AS WELL AS
A LEFT WING PARTY.
D) SOCIALIST CHIEF MARIO SOARES CALLED FOR RESTRUCTURING
OF ECONOMIC SECTOR AND WARNED AGAINST MAY DAY
VIOLENCE AND WHITE SEPARATIST FEELING OVERSEAS.
E) RESPECTED CONSERVATIVE MEMBER OF DISSOLVED NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY ADM. REBOREDO E SILVA STRESSED NEED FOR

RESPONSIBLE, THOUGHTFUL CONDUCT ON PART OF ALL PORTUGUESE.

F) MODERATE MONARCHIST LEADER HENRIQUE BARRILARO RUAS
PLEDGED MONARCHIST SUPPORT TO JUNTA AND STRESSED MONARCHISTS'
DEDICATION TO PERSONAL LIBERTY.

G) SOCIALIST LAWYER SALGADO ZENHA CALLED OLD REGIME ONE OF
"INSTITUTIONALIZED DISORDER" AND WARNED THAT NEW-FOUND
LIBERTY IN PORTUGAL MUST BE GUARDED VIGILANTLY OR IT WILL
BE LOST.

H) PROMINENT LAWYER JORGE SAMPAIO CALLED FOR
ORDERLY TRANSITION TO FREE, PLURALIST, SOCIALIST,
DEMOCRATIC REGIME.

5. TV COVERAGE OF MAY DAY DEMONSTRATIONS SHOWN EVENING
MAY 1 ALSO DEVOID OF LEFT-WING PROPAGANDA, STRESSING
INSTEAD JOY AND ORDERLINESS OF PORTUGUESE PEOPLE IN
CELEBRATING THEIR FREEDOM. COMMENTATORS PICKED UP
THREAD OF SPINOLA REMARKS EARLIER IN DAY TO STRESS THAT
MAY DAY HAD PROVEN THAT OLD REGIME'S INSISTENT AFFIRMATION
THAT PORTUGUESE PEOPLE WERE UNPREPARED FOR DEMOCRACY
WAS A MYTH. HIGHLIGHT OF MAY 1 EVENING TV BROADCAST
WAS INTERVIEW WITH THREE YOUNG OFFICERS ASSIGNED BY
JUNTA TO TV STUDIOS. OFFICERS STRESSED JUNTA'S INTENTION
TO INSURE BALANCED COVERAGE OF POLITICAL EVENTS AND TO
GUARANTEE ACCESSIBILITY OF ALL VIEWPOINTS IN ORDER TO
PREVENT WHAT ONE CALLED "OLD TOTALITARIANISM OF THE RIGHT
OR NEW TOTALITARIANISM OF THE LEFT". OFFICERS POINTED
TO BALANCED PROGRAM MENTIONED PARA 4 AS INDICATION THAT
EFFORTS WERE ON RIGHT TRACK.

6. COMMENT: MANY PORTUGUESE WILL BE RELIEVED IF, AS IT
NOW APPEARS PROBABLE, REGIME SUCCEEDS IN REVERSING MEDIA'S
SHARP TURN TO EXTREME LEFT.

SCOTT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JUNTA, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PARAMILITARY FORCES, FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, MUTUAL FORCE WITHDRAWALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LISBON01739
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740106-0703
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740577/aaaacqgg.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <30 JAN 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PORTUGUESE MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS SUMMARY: IMPORTANT STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF MEDIA IN
TAGS: PINT, PO, PU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005